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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Letter dated 3 October 1994 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 adopted on the occasion of the eighteenth annual Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 30 September 1994 (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 12, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 154 and 158.

(Signed) Ramtane LAMAMRA
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Algeria to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
New York

ANNEX

Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77, adopted on 30 September 1994

1. The eighteenth annual Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 30 September 1994.

2. The Ministers welcomed the admission of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a full member of the Group of 77.

3. The Ministers reviewed the developments, since their last meeting, in the international economic situation and the activities undertaken in the context of the development agenda of the United Nations. The Ministers expressed concern at the slow, uncertain and unbalanced growth of the global economy. Such growth patterns adversely affected the economic and social conditions in developing countries. The Ministers also expressed concern at the increase in protectionist tendencies in the developed countries, and the stagnation and decline in flows of official development assistance.

4. The Ministers emphasized that, to facilitate national efforts in developing countries aimed at economic and social progress, international development cooperation needed to be targeted at creating a more favourable international economic environment for the development efforts of the developing countries so as to facilitate investment flows to developing countries, for trade opportunities and improved terms of trade, transfer of technology, official development assistance, movement of factors of production and availability of commercial credit. They regretted that the processes and mechanisms of decision-making pertaining to those issues did not adequately involve or take into account the interests of the developing countries.

5. In this context, the Ministers reiterated the high priority they attached to the initiative of an agenda for development, reaffirmed the statement on an agenda for development adopted by the Special Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 held at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 24 June 1994 on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Group, and emphasized the need for the Secretary-General's revised report on an agenda for development, duly taking into account the Ministerial Statement of 24 June 1994, to propose action-oriented measures focusing on economic growth and development. The agenda should recognize the role of development in contributing not only to human welfare but also to long-term peace and stability, and acknowledge that long-term development will minimize the need for preoccupation with damage control and emergency action. The agenda for development should integrate the strategies, mechanisms and means of cooperation and implementation agreed upon or being negotiated in United Nations conferences.

6. The Ministers stressed that an agenda for development must strengthen the role of the United Nations in the area of international economic policy-making and coordination. To fulfil this role, an agenda for development must enhance the relationship between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and other multilateral institutions

for the promotion of sustained economic growth and development that particularly addressed the problems faced by developing countries.

7. The Ministers stressed that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should continue to provide inputs relating to the development dimension in international trade policy-making and implementation.

8. The Ministers stressed that, at a time when there was growing awareness of the need to support at the national level a combination of governmental action and market-based policies, participative and democratic decision-making and governance, similar approaches needed to be adopted with respect to international economic decision-making and functioning. The Ministers expressed concern at actions aimed at introducing new conditionalities in redefining the basis of international economic cooperation. They also expressed concern at the potential for conditionality and intrusiveness in concepts such as "sustainable human development" and "human security". Each country had to define its national goals, objectives and priorities in its development process. They stressed that the role of the international community was to support and supplement the national efforts of developing countries.

9. The Ministers welcomed the increase in private financial flows to developing countries. However, they noted that those flows were mainly short term and concentrated in a few countries and a few sectors. For the influence of those flows to be more significant in their impact on development, equitable growth, eradication of poverty and generation of full employment, it was essential that the flows be more widespread across countries and sectors. The international community must address itself to the issue of facilitating that through suitable incentive mechanisms and catalytic action instead of merely leaving it to competition among developing countries and their competitive changes in policy parameters and incentive structures.

10. The Ministers emphasized the urgent need for a substantial expansion in official development assistance. The commitment undertaken by the developed countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to developing countries had still not been fulfilled. The global partnership for sustainable development entered into during the recent years was based on the provision to the developing countries of substantial, new and additional financial resources to meet their huge sustainable development requirements. The Ministers noted with deep concern that official development assistance in 1993 had declined by US$ 6 billion. They expressed their concern that environmental policies and measures had become a conditionality on existing levels of assistance, even while the developed countries continued to threaten the environment through their unsustainable production and consumption patterns. In that context, the Ministers were of the view that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and Conference-related international agreements would require the mobilization of substantial, new and additional resources for meaningful implementation, instead of a recourse to merely reordering priorities and reallocating national and official development assistance budgets and called upon the developed countries to take the necessary measures for increased flows of official development assistance to the developing countries. Steps should also be taken for creation and allocation for development of special drawing

rights. In this context, the Ministers reiterated the urgent need for convening an international conference on financing for development.

11. The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the programme of action for the sustainable development of small island developing States at the Global Conference for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, as well as the adoption of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and called for their full implementation by the international community.

12. The Ministers reiterated the need for more effective measures for reduction of the debt and debt-servicing burden of the developing countries including cancellation of such debt. The reverse transfer of resources on that account negatively affected the ability of the developing countries to generate growth, and to take measures aimed at social development, including through provision of housing, education, health and nutrition. That was further exacerbated by the slow growth in the international economy. The Ministers reiterated the urgent need for an effective, comprehensive and equitable, development-oriented and durable solution to the debt problem of the developing countries. Any approach should cover all types of debt, including multilateral debt, and debtor developing countries. In addition, innovative measures such as debt for equity swaps, debt for social development swaps, debt for environment swaps, etc. should be considered and applied effectively. The Ministers took note with satisfaction of the initiative of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on debt and development and requested that the report and recommendations of the meeting be discussed in the framework of the Joint Coordinating Committee and considered at the present session of the General Assembly.

13. The Ministers welcomed the signing of the Uruguay Round Agreements at Marrakesh, Morocco, in April 1994 and reiterated the need for their timely ratification. They stressed the need for continued evaluation of implementation of these Agreements to ensure increased market access and expansion of world trade for all countries, particularly the developing countries. In this regard, the Ministers emphasized the importance of commitments pertaining to special and differential measures to mitigate any adverse effects arising from the implementation of the Round. In that context, the Ministers welcomed the offer made by the Government of Singapore to host the first ministerial conference of the World Trade Organization and affirmed the view that Singapore would be an appropriate venue for the first conference. The World Trade Organization, in its functioning, should contribute to a rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system and uphold the rights and interests of the weaker trading partners. It was necessary that appropriate monitoring measures be established to ensure that, in the implementation of the Uruguay Round, the interests of developing countries were adequately protected. Compensation should be provided to the developing countries facing difficulties. Attempts to bypass and undermine multilaterally agreed liberalization of trade through resort to unilateral actions and demands for concessions, over and beyond those agreed to in the Round, as well as attempts to use environmental and social concerns for protectionist purposes, must be resisted. In that context, they also noted with concern the increasing use by developed countries of "anti-dumping" measures and countervailing duty action against developing

countries. Trade policy could be an arbiter of all issues and the principles of non-discrimination and comparative advantage, which were an inalienable basis of international trade, must be sustained. An overburdening of the agenda of the World Trade Organization was likely to put the international trading system at risk and jeopardize the growth prospects of all countries. In the process of their increasing integration with the world economy, the developing countries would have special needs in terms of access to resources, markets and technology. Differential measures, including preferences, assistance and compensation had to be an essential part of this new enhanced interdependence.

14. The Ministers emphasized the need for more effective measures to upgrade science and technology capabilities in the developing countries. Their own experience and situation equipped them to develop and adapt technologies suited to their resource endowments and needs. Technology flows could not be left only to the private sector. In that context, measures should be taken for facilitating access to technologies and know-how on preferential and concessional terms, including to new technologies. Information on and flows of environmentally sound technologies must be promoted. Barriers should be removed to the access to and transfer of technologies to the developing countries. In that regard, the Ministers highlighted that the United Nations system should have a more active role in that area. In that context they stressed that UNCTAD should be provided with adequate resources to fulfil its mandate.

15. The Ministers called upon the international community for the immediate elimination of the use of coercive economic measures against developing countries which had not been authorized by the relevant organs of the United Nations or were inconsistent with the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one State on another.

16. The Ministers welcomed the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, and stressed the importance of the interlinkage between population, sustained economic growth and sustained development. They called for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Cairo Programme of Action on the national, regional and international levels. The Ministers underscored the vital importance of the role of both the international community and the United Nations system in mobilizing the necessary resources for the implementation of the programme of action. They highlighted the necessity of establishing a mechanism to follow up the implementation of the programme of action.

17. The Ministers reiterated the position of the Group of 77 adopted on the programme of action for the World Summit for Social Development, and emphasized the need for the draft declaration and the draft programme of action to be adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in March 1995, which respected the global approach to the eradication of poverty, the generation of productive employment and enhancement of social integration to reflect fully the concerns and interests of developing countries, particularly the commitment to put the needs of people at the centre of development and international cooperation, in the elaboration of objectives and commitments to be agreed during the third session of the Preparatory Committee.

18. The Ministers emphasized the importance of the Fourth World Conference on Women. They called for a platform for action conducive to the creation of an enabling environment for the empowerment of women.

19. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance to developing countries of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. They regretted the recent tendency of those activities of entering into controversy on account of non-economic and non-development factors. Operational activities for development of the United Nations system should carry out their activities within the framework of their mandates, taking into account the national specificities of the developing countries, and avoid any threat to their own universal acceptability and credibility. Within this framework, they stressed the need for more resources to be made available for operational activities on a continuous, predictable and assured basis. They also stressed the need for institutions that were involved in implementation of financial and technical cooperation programmes to be distinct from those involved in overall policy-making and coordination.

20. The Ministers reiterated their profound concern at the persistent critical economic situation in Africa and the deteriorating economic conditions in the least developed countries and urged the international community, particularly developed countries and the United Nations system, to adopt and implement concrete and effective measures to support the efforts of those countries in the process of economic reforms and development. They also called upon the international community to increase its assistance to those countries in their efforts towards the diversification of their economies.

21. The Ministers expressed their concern that structural adjustment programmes often had adverse effects on the social sectors, in particular, education, health, nutrition and employment. In this respect, the Ministers called for the provision of effective means, including new and additional financial resources, targeted at social sector development. They also called on the international financial institutions to enhance their assistance to developing countries implementing reform programmes in establishing social safety nets.

22. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to South-South cooperation as a necessary and viable strategy for greater collective self-reliance for national, regional and global development, and as a major mechanism for the promotion of growth and accelerated development. The dynamism introduced through such cooperation would also contribute to strengthening the world economy and restructuring of international economic relations. The United Nations system and the developed countries should support such cooperation, including through financial and technical assistance. To that end, the Ministers called upon the United Nations to consider convening an international conference on South-South cooperation in 1996. They also noted with interest that "Partners in population and development: a South-South initiative", was launched within the framework of the International Conference on Population and Development.

23. The Ministers approved the report of the Committee of Experts of the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, presented in accordance with the mandates of IFCC-VIII, and approved its recommendations. They expressed their satisfaction with the

results so far achieved by the Fund and agreed to explore ways and means to further expand the resources of this unique funding mechanism for projects on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries, in particular, through recourse to an increase of core capital through contributions from both developing and developed countries, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions and organizations. They equally agreed to extend the tenure of office of the members of the Committee of Experts to a three-year period.

24. The Ministers welcomed the coming into operation of the Joint Coordinating Committee between the Group of 77 and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in June 1994 on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Group of 77.

25. The Ministers reiterated the need for strengthening the United Nations to enable it to contribute more effectively to development. The United Nations, with its universal membership, had a critical and inalienable role in the area of consensus-building for international economic and development cooperation. The views and consensus expressed in this forum should be taken into account by different institutions and agencies in devising their assistance and operation programmes. In that context, the Ministers called for a reinvigorated effort by the United Nations system and the international community to promote development. That would require the necessary focus on sustained and accelerated economic growth and development, while keeping in mind the requirements of the supporting infrastructure, including through social and national structures, a favourable international economic environment and international development cooperation. Developing country concerns must be integrated into all deliberations of global trade, finance and technology cooperation. The emphasis should be on the substance of the measures required rather than a preoccupation with reforming merely the structures of cooperation and interaction or developing new terminologies which did not contribute to tackling the problems at hand and lead not to development, but only to conditionalities.

26. The Ministers noted the initiation of Palestinian self-government arrangements in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area and called for the speedy extension of Palestinian self-government arrangements to encompass the entire occupied territories in implementation of the Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements. In that regard, they reaffirmed their support of the Palestinian people as they strive to attain their inalienable rights, including the right to establish an independent State on their national soil, including Jerusalem. They also reaffirmed the permanent responsibility of the United Nations towards the question of Palestine. They emphasized the need for international assistance to support Palestinian development efforts in the economic and social fields. The Ministers also reaffirmed their support for the peace process initiated at the Peace Conference on the Middle East held at Madrid, which aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) and the principle of land for peace.